United Nations A/AC.265/3

General Assembly

Distr.: General
26 September 2002

Original: English

Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities
New York, 29 July-9 August 2002

Letter dated 30 July 2002 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith China's non-paper on the issue of persons with disabilities (see annex).

I would be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the first session of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention to Promote and Protect the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities.

(*Signed*) **Wang** Yingfan
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Annex to the letter dated 30 July 2002 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Chinese]

Non-paper on the question of persons with disabilities

1. Protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, valuing their worth and tapping their potential are important indications of how civilized and progressive a society is. Persons with disabilities must enjoy the same rights as those without disabilities, and their cause must be the object of widespread concern.

2. Persons with disabilities want to participate in social life; they have a spirit of independence and self-reliance, and they are capable of making a contribution to society. They are creators of society's material and spiritual wealth.

3. Persons with disabilities constitute a vulnerable group; it is still quite common for them to be excluded and marginalized. Their rights must be safeguarded by legal means, and a better legal system to ensure equality, participation and sharing should be established.

4. In formulating their educational, rehabilitation, employment and social security policies, States should take the specific characteristics and needs of persons with disabilities fully into account and should ensure that issues relating to such persons are reflected in comprehensive national social and economic plans.

5. States should pay particular attention to:

(a) Improving the overall quality of life of persons with disabilities;

(b) Providing opportunities for persons with disabilities to obtain education, training and gainful employment and to participate in decision-making at all levels;

(c) Eliminating discriminatory social attitudes towards persons with disabilities and all barriers in the areas of, inter alia, information, the law and infrastructure;

(d) Increasing the resources allocated to ensure the equal participation of persons with disabilities.

6. The problems of persons with disabilities are not only social issues but also development issues. Many rights of persons with disabilities can be implemented only through social development.

7. The international instruments adopted by the United Nations such as the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities can play an important role in promoting the rights and improving the situation of persons with disabilities. These instruments will continue to form an indispensable part of the principles guiding the cause of persons with disabilities.

8. The drafting of a convention on the rights of persons with disabilities is consistent with the development of human society and meets the demands of the world's 600 million persons with disabilities. The international community must

give serious consideration to and actively create the conditions for the drafting of the convention.

9. Some 80 per cent of persons with disabilities live in developing countries, many of them still in poverty. The draft convention under consideration should focus on the special conditions and difficulties of persons with disabilities in developing countries and should reflect the just demands of the developing countries.

10. The convention should be a programmatic document that provides broad guidance for all States. States are encouraged to adopt a positive and practical attitude in formulating effective rules and measures.

11. The Chinese Government attaches great importance to the cause of persons with disabilities and supports the drafting by the United Nations of a convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. It intends to do its utmost for the drafting of the convention and for the attainment of the goal of "equality, participation and sharing" for persons with disabilities.

12. The international community should cooperate on the issue of persons with disabilities on the basis of the principle of experience-sharing and equal benefit. The developed countries should take into account the developing countries' low economic level and incomplete social security systems, and should take concrete steps to provide the developing countries with support and financial assistance in order to help them solve the problems of persons with disabilities.

13. All countries should work together to advance the cause of persons with disabilities, thereby enabling those persons to share in the world's material and cultural achievements.